

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 018430  
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON:BDF

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON

S/S -O:SGOLDSMITH

-----270306Z 059591 /62

O 270232Z JAN 77 ZFF6

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 018430

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS, LE

SUBJECT: ASF MOVEMENTS IN SOUTH LEBANON

1. SECRETARY ASKED AMBASSADOR DINITZ TO CALL EVENING OF WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, AND CONVEYED TO HIM FOLLOWING ORAL MESSAGE IN RESPONSE TO ISRAELI MESSAGE RECEIVED EARLIER THE SAME DAY (SEPTEL).

2. BEGIN MESSAGE: WE HAVE CONSIDERED CAREFULLY THE REPLY FROM MR. ALLON TO OUR ORAL MESSAGE OF LAST NIGHT.

WE HAVE STUDIED ALL THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US ABOUT THE MOVE OF SYRIAN ARAB SECURITY FORCE PERSONNAL TO THE NABATIYAH AREA, AND IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT THE PURPOSE WAS AS STATED TO US BY PRESIDENT SARKIS WITHOUT ANY

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 018430

ULTERIOR MOTIVES.

WERE PRESIDENT SARKIS ACTUALLY TO WITHDRAW THE FORCES UNDER PRESSURE, THIS WOULD BE A SERIOUS LOSS OF FACE FOR HIM IN THE EYES NOT ONLY OF THE PALESTINIAN AND LEFTIST FORCES IN LEBANON BUT IN THE EYES OF THE CHRISTIANS AS WELL. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS WOULD BE EITHER IN OUR INTERESTS

OR IN THOSE OF ISRAEL WHICH WE HAVE UNDERSTOOD AGREES WITH US THAT IT IS DESIRABLE TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO STRENGTHEN PRESIDENT SARKIS' AUTHORITY.

WE HAVE ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD ISRAEL'S SENSITIVITY ABOUT THE MOVEMENT OF SYRIAN FORCES SOUTH OF THE LITANI RIVER, AND WE KNOW THAT ISRAEL HAS ALSO OBJECTED TO THEIR MOVEMENT INTO THE NABATIYAH AREA AS WELL. WE WOULD APPRECIATE, HOWEVER, A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE THREAT WHICH ISRAEL SEES FROM THIS MOVE WHICH, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, CONSISTS OF NO MORE THAN 600 PERSONNEL THINLY DISTRIBUTED IN THE AREA AND ALONG THE ROAD TO THE NORTH AT NABATIYAH.

AS WE HAVE SAID, WE ARE PREPARED TO MAKE VERY CLEAR TO PRESIDENT SARKIS AND THE SYRIANS THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO FURTHER MOVE SOUTHWARD OF NON-LEBANESE FORCES, THAT ANY CONSIDERATION OF DOING SO SHOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF CONSULTATION BY PRESIDENT SARKIS WITH US AND BY US WITH ISRAEL, AND THAT HE SHOULD WITHDRAW THE SYRIAN UNITS FROM THE NABATIYAH AREA AS SOON AS CONDITIONS PERMIT, AND WILL IN ANY CASE REPLACE THEM AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME WITH LEBANESE FORCES.

BEFORE WE COMMUNICATE FURTHER WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS AND THE SYRIANS, WE WOULD ASK THAT ISRAEL RECONSIDER ITS POSITION ON THE NEED FOR WITHDRAWAL OF THE ARAB SECURITY FORCE PERSONNEL IN LIGHT OF THE CONSIDERATIONS WE HAVE SET FORTH. END MESSAGE.

3. DINITZ SAID HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY COMMUNICATE FOREGOING  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 018430

TO JERUSALEM. MEANWHILE, ISRAELIS HAD UPDATED INTELLIGENCE INDICATING SYRIANS HAD A TOTAL OF ONE FORTIFIED INFANTRY BATTALION, ONE FORTIFIED INFANTRY COMPANY AND TWO TANK COMPANIES BETWEEN KAFR HUNAH AND NABATIYAH AND IN VICINITY OF NABATIYAH AND AL-AISHIYAH. SECRETARY SAID IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN MOVEMENT OF ADDITIONAL SYRIAN UNITS INTO SOUTH SINCE OUR APPROACH TO LEBANESE AND SYRIANS. DINITZ REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW BUT THIS LATEST INTELLIGENCE SEEMED TO SUGGEST LARGER FORCES THAN WE HAD ORIGINALLY INDICATED. DINITZ SAID THAT ISRAELI VIEW WAS THAT EVEN IF SYRIANS WERE BEING CAUTIOUS, THIS FOLLOWED A PAST PATTERN OF TESTING REACTIONS AND, IF THERE WERE NO OBJECTIONS, MOVING MORE SUBSTANTIAL FORCES IN. THIS RAISES THE QUESTION OF THE CREDIBILITY OF THE ISRAELI AND U.S. RESPONSE.

4. THE SECRETARY ASKED IF DINITZ HAD ANY REACTION TO OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE PROBLEM SARKIS FACES. DINITZ SAID HE

THOUGHT THE SYRIANS WERE USING SARKIS. THE LATTER COULD WITHDRAW THE SYRIAN ASF FORCES AND EXPLAIN THIS BY SAYING THAT THEY WOULD BE REPLACED WITH LEBANESE FORCES WHEN AVAILABLE.

5. THE SECRETARY AND DINITZ AGREED THAT WE WOULD BOTH CHECK OUR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION AND BE BACK IN TOUCH.

VANCE

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ARMED FORCES, TROOP DEPLOYMENT, SECURITY, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, TROOP CONCENTRATION, CAT-B  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 27-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977STATE018430  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** ALATHERTON:BDF  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** P850106-1663  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770112/aaaaakbf.tel  
**Line Count:** 125  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 96b9b5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ORIGIN NODS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** NODIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3482747  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ASF MOVEMENTS IN SOUTH LEBANON  
**TAGS:** PFOR, MOPS, IS, SY, LE, US, AL, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (DINITZ, SIMCHA)  
**To:** TEL AVIV BEIRUT MULTIPLE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/96b9b5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009